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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/797,572

03/11/2004

John Peter Walsh

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03/05/2009

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EXAMINER

LAUX, JESSICA L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3635

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/05/2009

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/797,572	<b>Applicant(s)</b> WALSH, JOHN PETER	
	<b>Examiner</b> JESSICA LAUX	<b>Art Unit</b> 3635	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 November 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 and 27-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14, 27-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)          | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election of Invention I in the reply filed on 11/19/2007 and 11/07/2008 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made final.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**Claims 1-14, 27-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Phillips (2675338) in view of Moyes (6312540).**

Claims 1, 12-14, 27, 28, 31. Phillips discloses a method of forming a molded plywood door skin, where the plywood is free of a nonsolid mat (see figures and disclosure), comprising:

disposing the conditioned plywood board in a mold press having a contoured mold cavity; and

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deforming the plywood board in the mold press using sufficient heat and pressure to form a molded plywood door skin having a substantially uniform thickness and a substantially uniform density and contoured portions corresponding to said mold cavity.

Phillips does not expressly disclose material of the core or the detailed process of the molding nor does Phillips disclose conditioning the plywood with water.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify the plywood material of Phillips to be a luan, natural wood and the core material to be MDF, shipboard, osb, softboard, hardboard or particleboard as these are all common materials used in plywood and they are readily available and easily worked.

Moyes discloses a method of forming a board using sufficient heat and pressure and further discloses conditioning a board comprising with water (49; Col. 6, lines 43-61).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to mold the board of Phillips with the molding process of Moyes as both use sufficient heat and pressure to mold and the method of Moyes further enables for efficient and cost effect method of molding.

Regarding claim 2: The method of claim 1, further comprising closing the mold press at a predetermined closure rate (Moyes - Col. 8, lines 26-36).

Regarding claims 4-5: The method of claim 1, wherein said conditioning of the plywood board comprises exposing the plywood board to steam in an atmospheric

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chamber (Moyes - Col. 6, lines 59-61; where an atmospheric chamber or a pressurized sealed cavity are common and well known methods of steaming boards).

Regarding claim 7: The method of claim 1, wherein said conditioning of the plywood board comprises soaking the plywood board in a water bath (Moyes - Col. 6, lines 43-61).

Regarding claim 11: The method of claim 1, wherein said conditioning of the plywood board increases moisture content of the plywood board to between about 9-15% (which is between about 10-40% as applicant has claimed; (Moyes - Col. 6, line 49).

Regarding claim 3: Phillips in view of Moyes discloses the method of claim 2 above but does not expressly disclose that the closure rate is between about 3 mm per minute and about 7 mm per minute. However, Moyes does disclose that various closure rates are acceptable depending the specific features of the board. Further applicant has not disclosed that such a closure provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art furthermore would have expected applicant's claimed closure rate and that as disclosed by Moyes to perform equally well considering they both close the press at a constant predetermined rate. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the closure step of Moyes to be at a rate as claimed by applicant as such a modification appears to be a matter of mere design choice which fails patentably distinguish of the prior art of Moyes.

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Regarding claims 6, 29, and 32: Phillips in view of Moyes discloses the method of claim 5, but does not expressly disclose that the plywood board is exposed to steam in the pressurized, sealed cavity for at least about 30 minutes during said conditioning step.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to steam the board for 30 minutes because applicant has not disclosed that such a limitation provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Moyes step of steaming, and applicant's invention to perform equally well with either the step of steaming taught by Moyes or the claimed step of steaming because both steps would perform the same function of moisturizing the board to an acceptable moisture content equally well considering.

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to modify Moyes to obtain the invention as specified in claim 6 because such a modification would have been considered a mere design consideration which fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art of Moyes.

Regarding claims 8, 30, and 33: Phillips in view of Moyes discloses the method of claim 7, but does not expressly disclose that the plywood board is soaked in the water bath for at least about 4 hours during said conditioning step.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to soak the board for 4 hours because applicant has not disclosed that such a limitation provides an advantage, is

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used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Moyes step of soaking, and applicant's invention to perform equally well with either the step of soaking taught by Moyes or the claimed step of soaking because both steps would perform the same function of moisturizing the board to an acceptable moisture content equally well considering.

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to modify Moyes to obtain the invention as specified in claim 8 because such a modification would have been considered a mere design consideration which fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art of Moyes.

Regarding claims 9-10: Phillips in view of Moyes discloses the method of claim 1 and further using surfactants to achieve a desired moisture pick-up (Moyes - Col. 6, lines 54-56), but does not expressly disclose that the said conditioning step includes exposing the plywood board to a surface spray.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to condition the boards using a surface spray because applicant has not disclosed that such a limitation provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Moyes step of conditioning, and applicant's invention to perform equally well with either the step of conditioning taught by Moyes or the claimed step of conditioning because both steps would perform the same function of moisturizing the board to an acceptable moisture content equally well

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considering. Further applicant has disclosed in the specification and claims several different steps of conditioning to be acceptable (such as a water bath or steaming).

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to modify Moyes to obtain the invention as specified in claims 9-10 because such a modification would have been considered a mere design consideration which fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art of Moyes.

Regarding claim 25: The method of claim 1, wherein said deforming step includes forming a molded plywood door skin having a substantially uniform thickness (Moyes - Col. 5, lines 51-52).

Regarding claim 26: The method of claim 1, wherein said deforming step includes forming a molded plywood door skin having a substantially uniform density (Moyes - Col. 3, lines 1-5).

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JESSICA LAUX whose telephone number is (571)272-8228. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Thursday, 9:00am to 5:00pm (est).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Chilcot can be reached on 571-272-6777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Richard E. Chilcot, Jr./  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3635

/J. L./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3635